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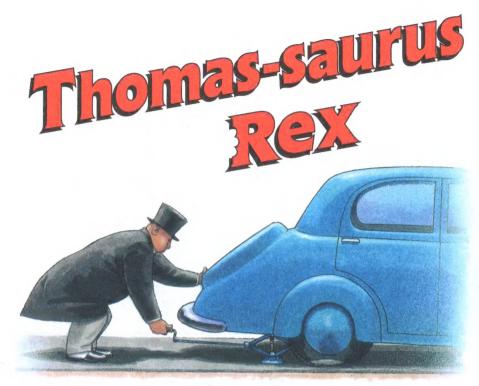
from Thomas & Friends Wooden Railway!

Play along as Thomas and Stepney deliver their special cargo to the museum fair and learn how Really Useful they can be.

The Thomas Wooden Rallway system is designed to grow with a child's increasing ability and creativity. As a child's skills develop, add more track, vehicles, destinations, and accessories.



For more information on Thomas Wooden Railway, call 800-704-8697 or visit www.learningcurve.com.



Illustrated by Richard Courtney A Random House PICTUREBACK® Book

Random House All New York

Thomas the Tank Engine & Friends®

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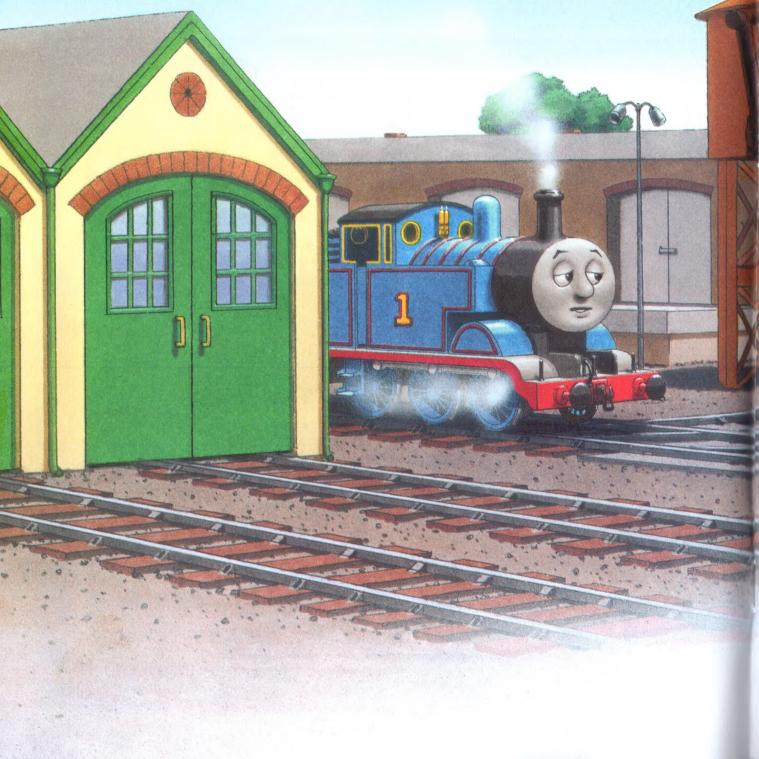
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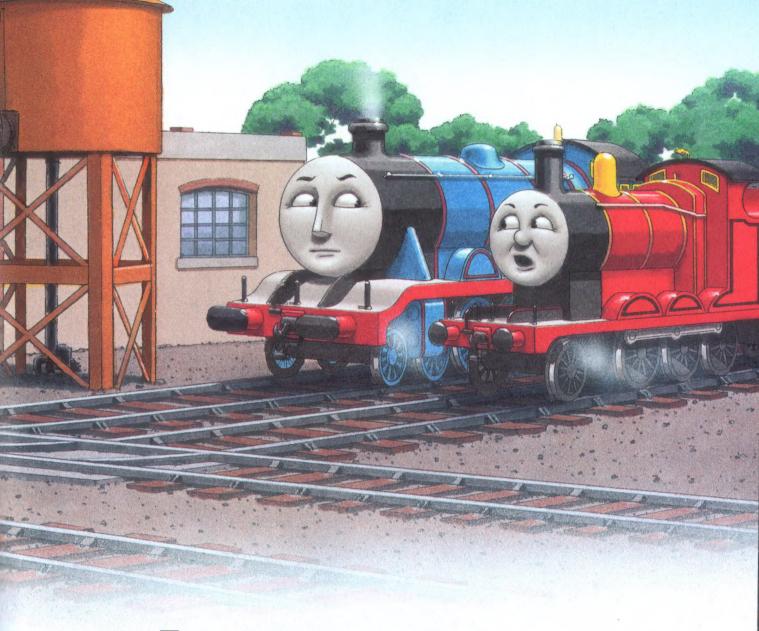
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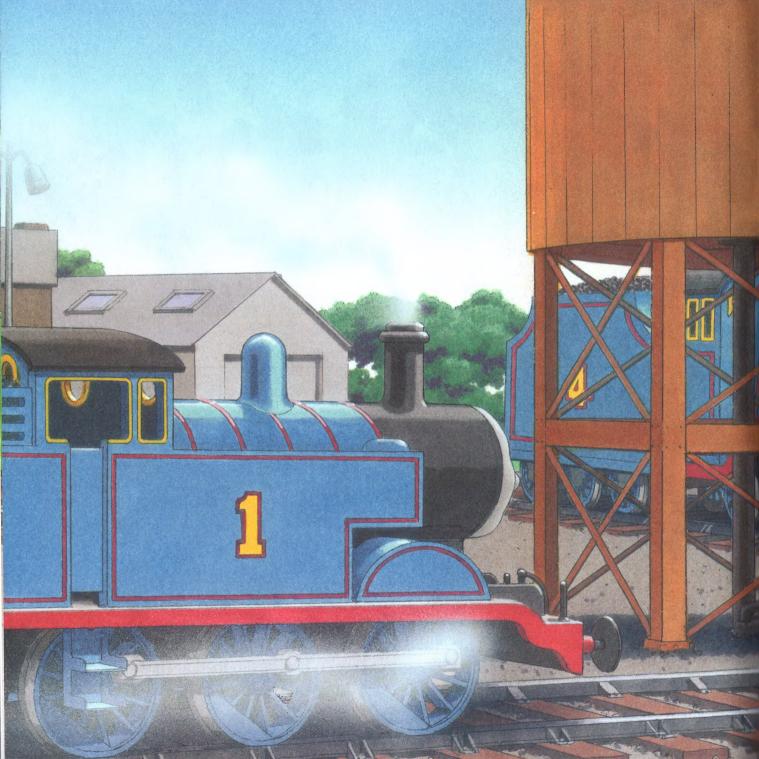
First Edition

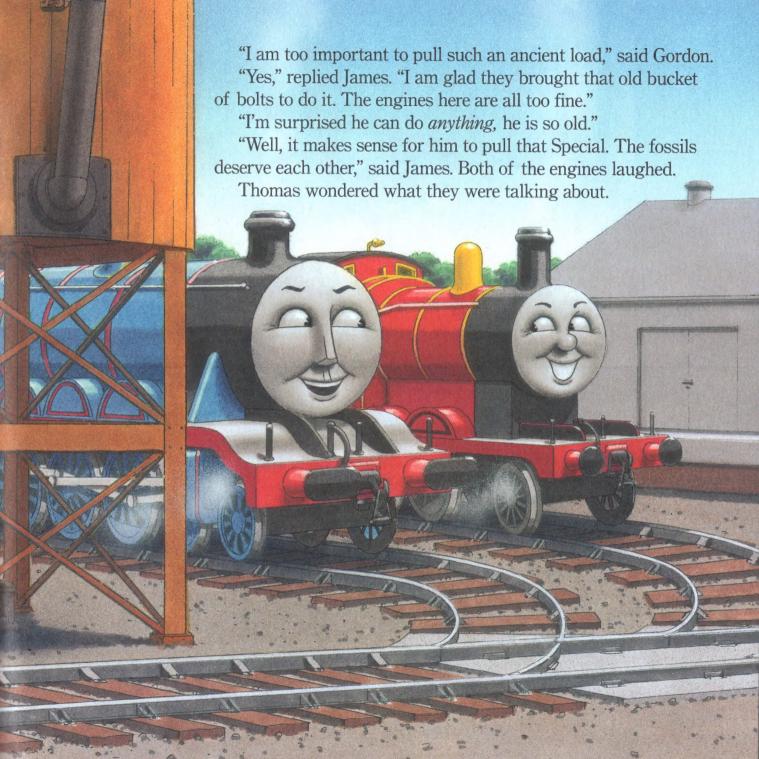


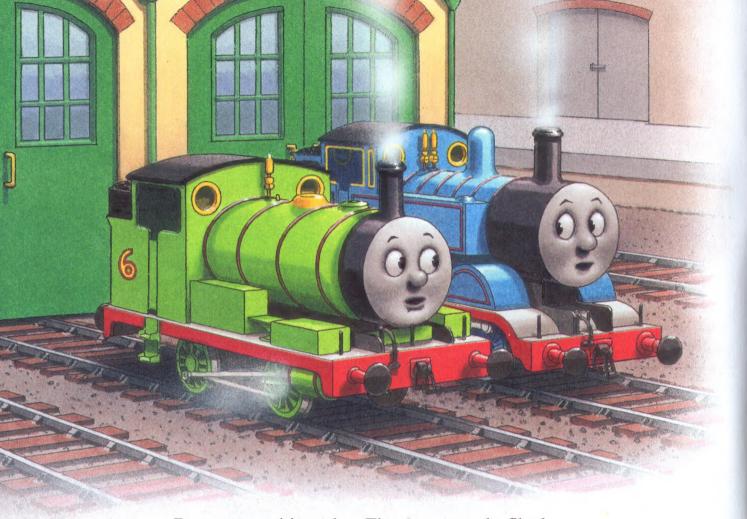




Thomas puffed into the Yard after a long day. He saw James and Gordon talking together. When he stopped at the water tower, he could hear everything they said.







Percy was waiting when Thomas got to the Shed.

"Did you see Stepney?" asked Percy. "Did you see what his Special is?"

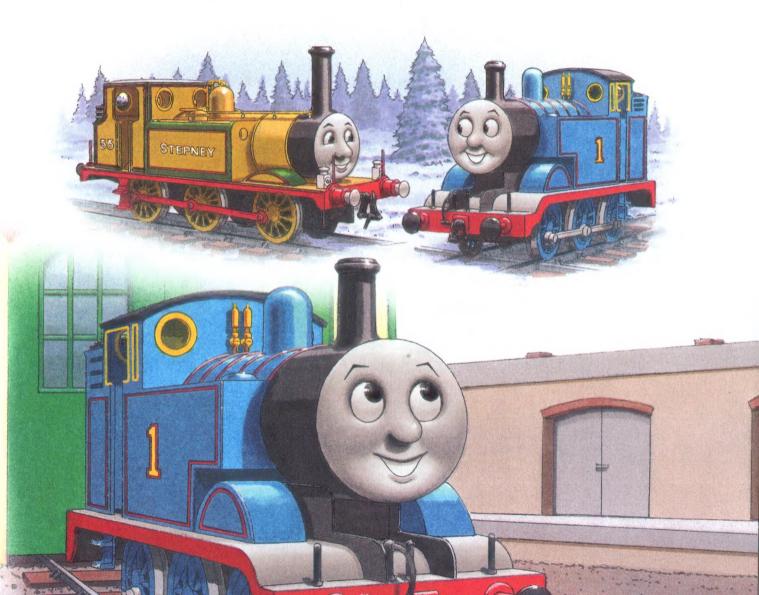
"No, but I heard Gordon and James talking about it," answered Thomas. "They said it was a lot of old junk."

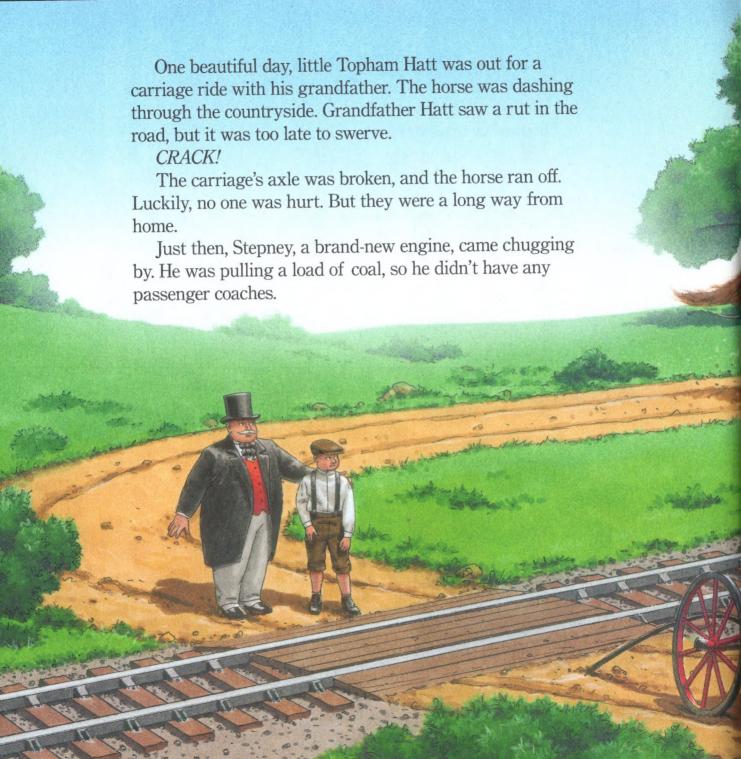
"I think it's kind of neat," said Percy.

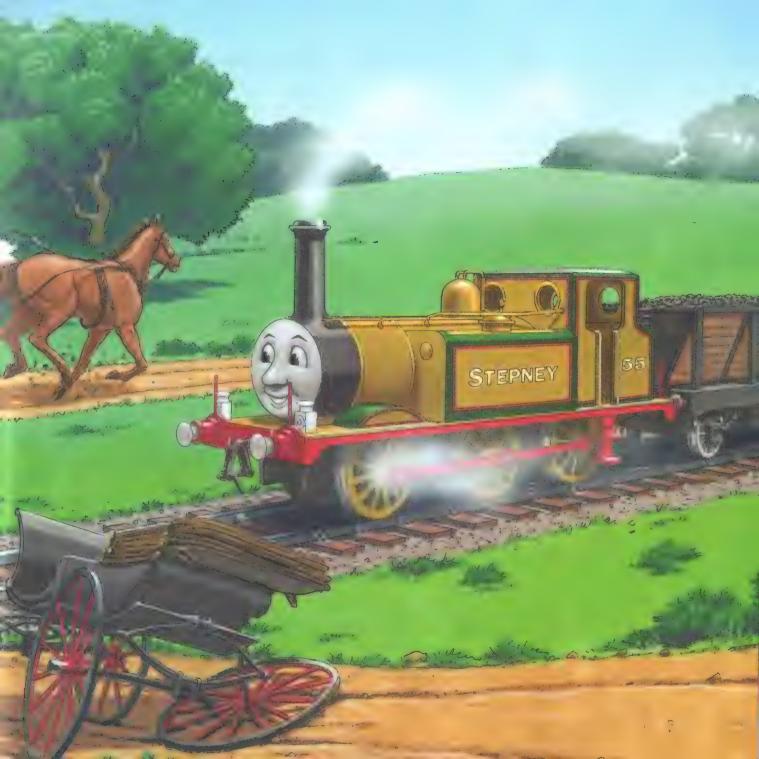
"Don't let them hear you say that," said Thomas. "They'll tease you, too."

Thomas liked Stepney. Stepney was one of the oldest engines on the whole Island of Sodor. He had seen a lot and had interesting stories to tell.

Thomas' favorite story was about Sir Topham Hatt as a little boy.

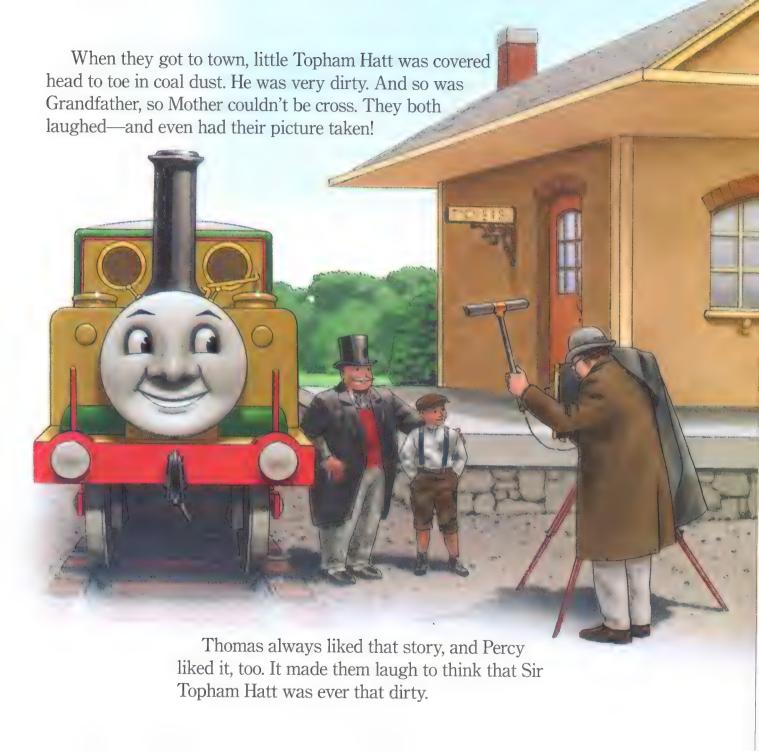


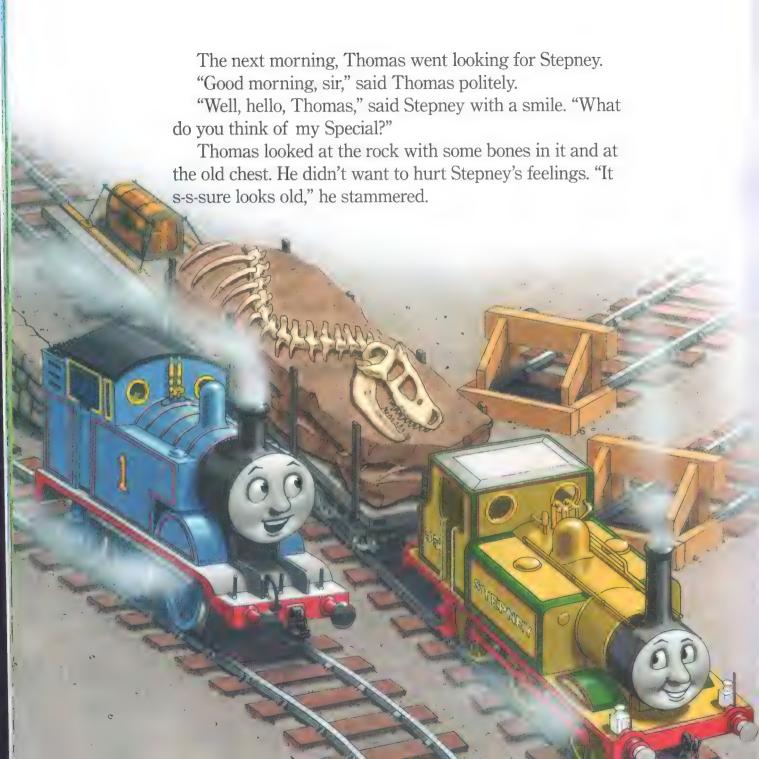


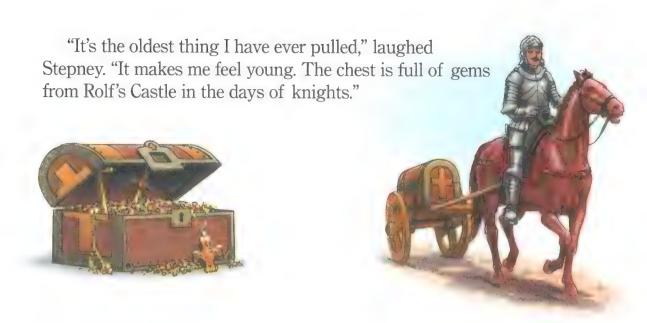


There was only one thing to do. Topham Hatt and his grandfather crawled up on top of the pile of coal. And off they went.









"This fossil is from the age of dinosaurs. It is going to be part of the museum fair at Tidmouth. And so am I, because I am *so* old," he added proudly.



Thomas thought the things seemed pretty interesting, but he remembered Gordon and James saying they were junk. Thomas didn't know what to think.

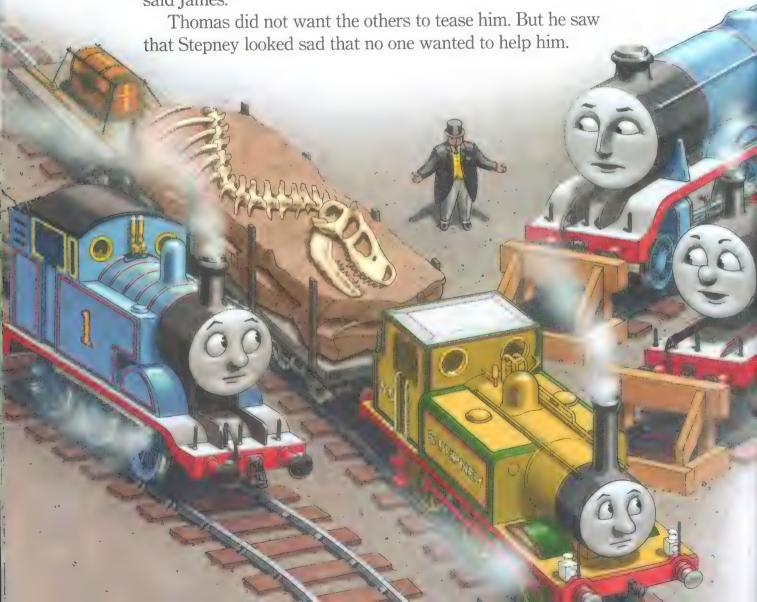


Just then, Sir Topham Hatt came to see the engines. "Stepney and his Special must go to Tidmouth for the museum show," he said. "But the hill to Tidmouth may be too steep for Stepney with that valuable Special. So someone will need to help push from behind."

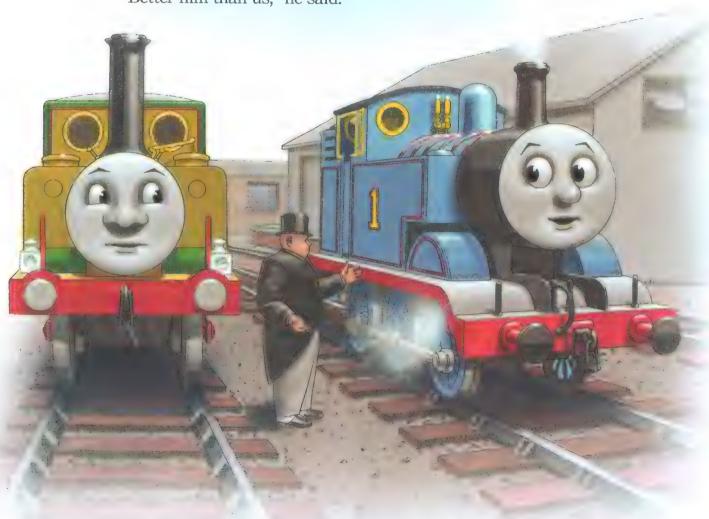


"Push? I would not *push* a Special made of solid gold," said Gordon, "let alone that pile of old junk. I only *pull* Specials, and important ones at that."

"I don't think we should have to push that Special, Sir," said James.

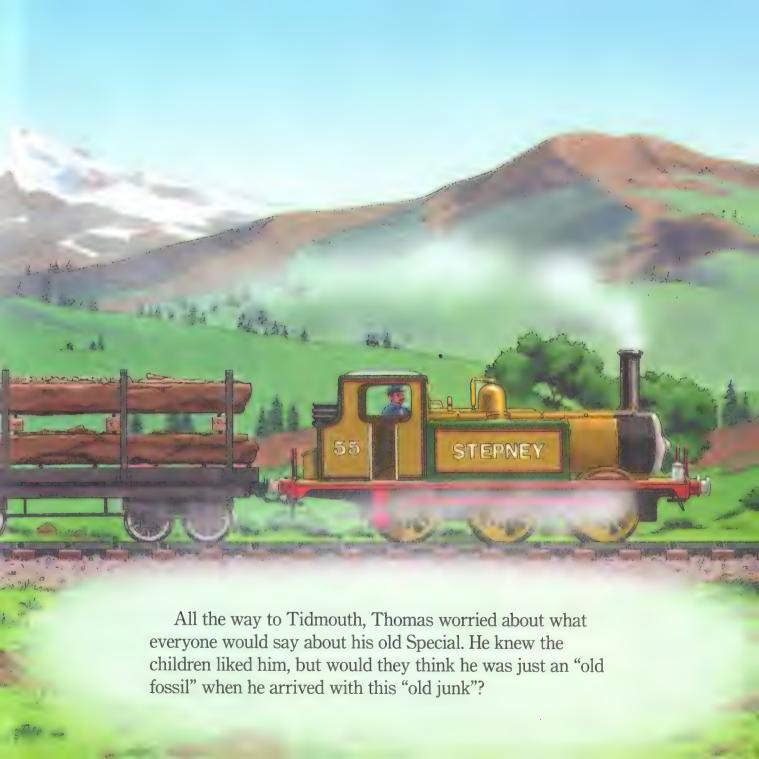


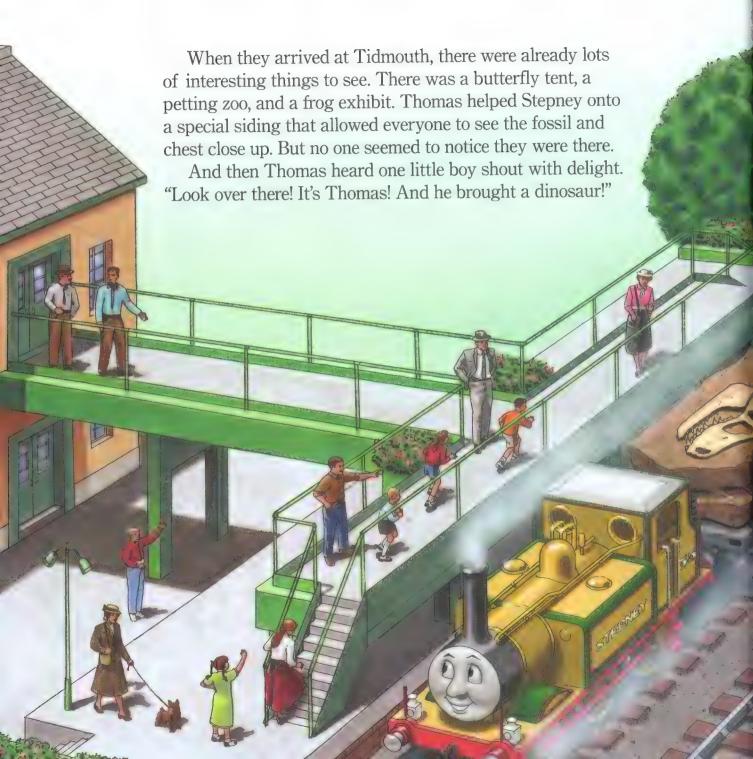
"I will push Stepney's Special," he quietly volunteered.
"Thank you, Thomas," said Sir Topham Hatt.
"I appreciate it when engines prove that they are Really Useful." And then he gave Gordon a stern look.
Gordon puffed, and James gave a cheeky chuckle.
"Better him than us," he said.

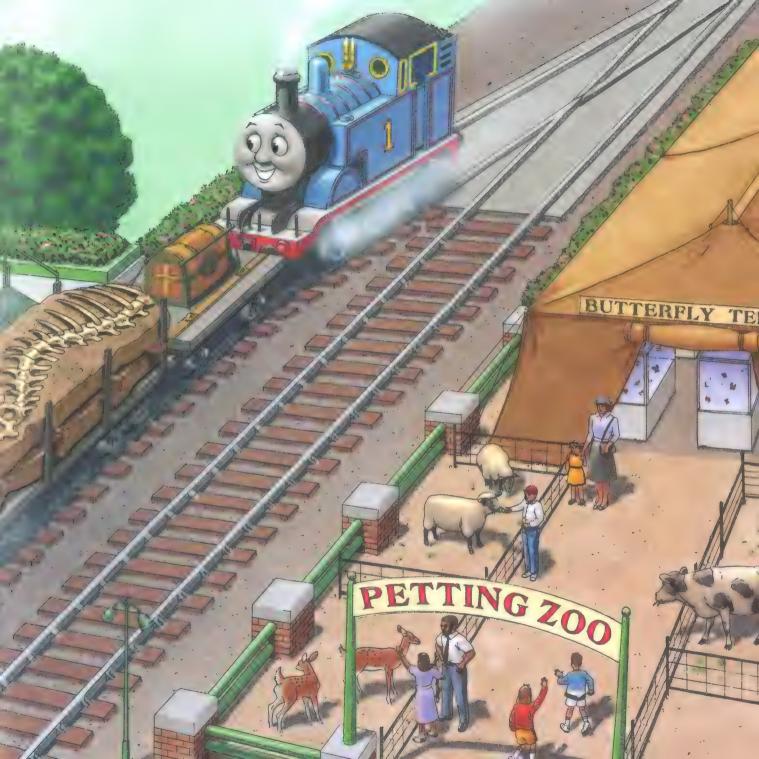


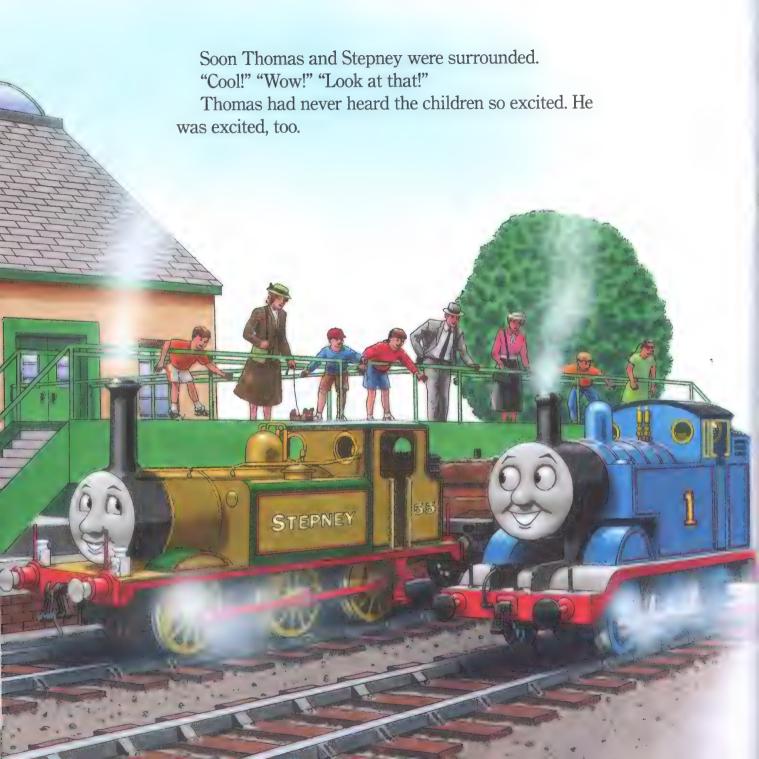
Thomas pushed the Special out of the Yard. He heard James call out, "Don't let them mistake you for that old junk and send *you* to the scrap yard."

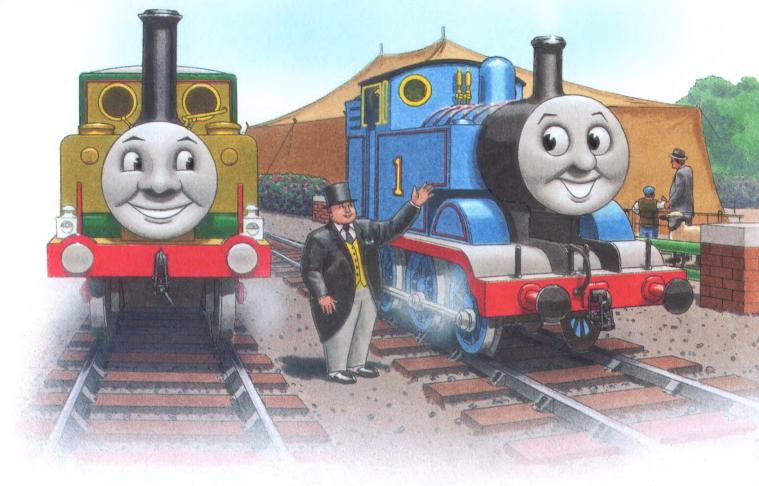










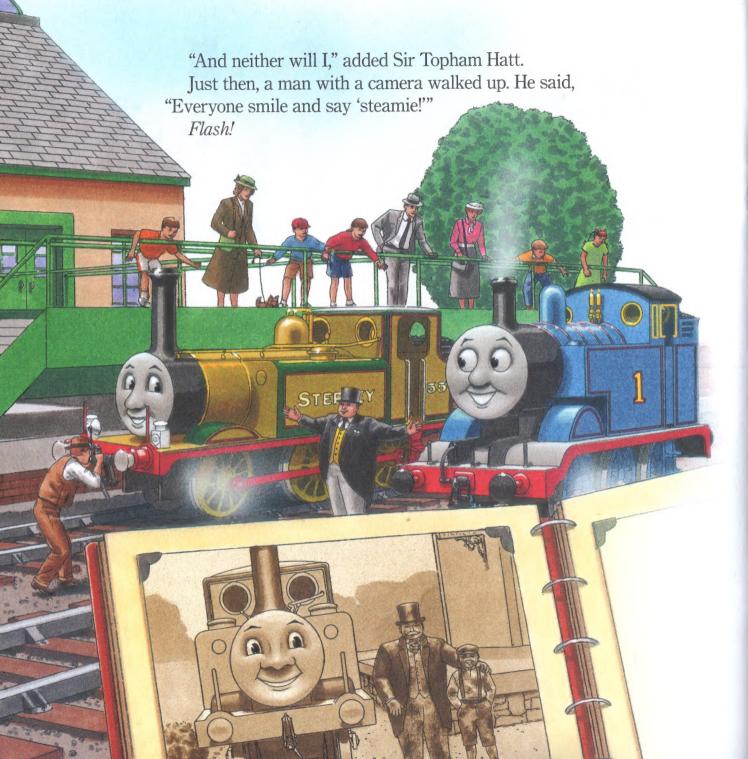


Sir Topham Hatt walked over to them. Thomas was surprised to see that he looked dirty.

"Good work, Thomas!" said Sir Topham Hatt. "I should have come with you and Stepney. I got a flat tire. I haven't been this dirty in a long, long time." He laughed. "Do you remember that day on the coal car, Stepney?"

"I sure do," chuckled Stepney. "You were a happy little boy, Sir."

"Just like these children. They will never forget this day."



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